

***Hydroporus ferrugineus* Stephens and *Hydroporus marginatus* (Duftschmid)
(Col.: Dytiscidae) in Dorset**

A few months ago, Prof. John Owen suggested that it might be interesting to look for *Hydroporus marginatus* at a site near Cranborne, close to my home. It had been found there by Donisthorpe and reported in the *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. The references have been omitted from the species index of the magazine, but the note, entitled "*Hydroporus ferrugineus* Steph.; a new and an old record" is in volume 72 (1936) page 66. Donisthorpe refers to the spot as a locality in Hampshire, but as he mentions Cranborne this is surely an error and his site must be in Dorset. He describes "a sort of lake with a stream running through it" and caught his specimens in the lake on 11 June 1933.

On 4 November 1998 I visited a site some three kilometres north-west of Cranborne where a pond is marked on the Ordnance Survey map (SU 0315). The pond and stream were both dry, but the stream began to flow closer to Cranborne. I soon found *Hydroporus ferrugineus*. Several specimens were netted within a few metres of the spring, but none further downstream. After heavy rain the site was revisited on 13 November 1998. The stream now began a kilometre further upstream. *H. ferrugineus* was still present at the first site, but could not be found elsewhere. By 29 January 1999, the stream had backed up well beyond the pond, which was now full. Two specimens of *H. marginatus* were caught from grass at the edge of a stony section of the stream near the pond; *ferrugineus* was found here and in the pond.— A.J. ALLEN, 56 Windsor Way, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 3BN.

A note on the outdoor incidence of the Death-watch Beetle *Xestobium rufovillosum* (Degeer) (Col.: Anobiidae)

In an interesting article (1998, *Antenna*: 190-200) on this notorious insect, Dr W.M. Blaney states (p.190) that it "is rarely reported in the wild, where it is believed to occur in the decaying parts of oak and willow trees" (my italics), giving as authorities Birch and Menendez, 1991, and Fisher, 1937. I should like to correct the impression which seems to have got about that the beetle is little known in Britain in the wild – something of which I was not aware. Fowler (1890, *Col.Brit.Isl.* 4: 191) gives rather numerous localities, many of them obviously referring to outdoor occurrence; Donisthorpe (1939, *Prelim. List Col. Windsor Forest* : 85) writes "In beech, hawthorn and oak trees . . . sometimes in numbers under bark of old oaks." I first found *Xestobium* in a decayed oak trunk in Farningham Wood, West Kent, in April 1933, and in the course of many visits to Windsor Forest and Great Park met with it quite frequently under bark of old oaks, sometimes in plenty; twice in beech, and once in birch. I think this will serve to show that the Death-watch is no rarity in the wild, and have little doubt that it is to be found equally freely throughout its range in old forest and parkland.— A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.